

## The Professional Writing Checklist

- Streamline your sentences.**
  - Limit sentences to a maximum of 25 words.
  - Eliminate extra words, jargon, passive voice, and abstract words.
  - Make sure all like sentence elements are parallel.
- Remember these key grammar rules:**
  - A singular subject has a singular verb, and plural subjects have plural verbs.
  - Pronouns have to match the nouns they refer to.
    - ◆ *Eileen had her car towed to the garage.*
    - ◆ *Each employee needs to update his/her security information.*
  - Subject and object pronouns each have their place.
    - ◆ *The agreement is between Daniel and me.*
    - ◆ *He is a better speaker than I.*
- Organize.**
  - Make a logical outline.
  - Make sure all your paragraphs:
    - ✓ Begin with a topic sentence or a transition sentence.
    - ✓ Stay with one main idea. Weed out irrelevant material.
    - ✓ Use transition words to help the reader see a logical connection.
- Write for your audience, using the appropriate style.**
  - Personal (formal or informal) – Use active voice and personal pronouns.
  - Impersonal Formal – Use passive voice, no personal pronouns, no contractions, and refer to people by their titles.
- Use an effective opening and close.**
  - Introductory Paragraph – for reports and memos
  - Clear, simple sentence – for emails, letters, memos
- Edit and proofread.**

## Seven Essential Steps to Good Writing

1. Get clear about your purpose for writing.
2. Define your audience.
3. Get the facts.
4. List your main points.
5. Put your main points in logical order. Make an outline or use one of the Standard Formats.
6. Write an Introductory Paragraph. Follow these guidelines.
  - ◆ Clearly state your primary argument, topic, or point.
  - ◆ Tell the reader where the paper is going and how you intend to make your case.
  - ◆ Present all of the main topics that your completed paper will cover, in the same order in which you intend to cover them.
7. Revise and edit.

